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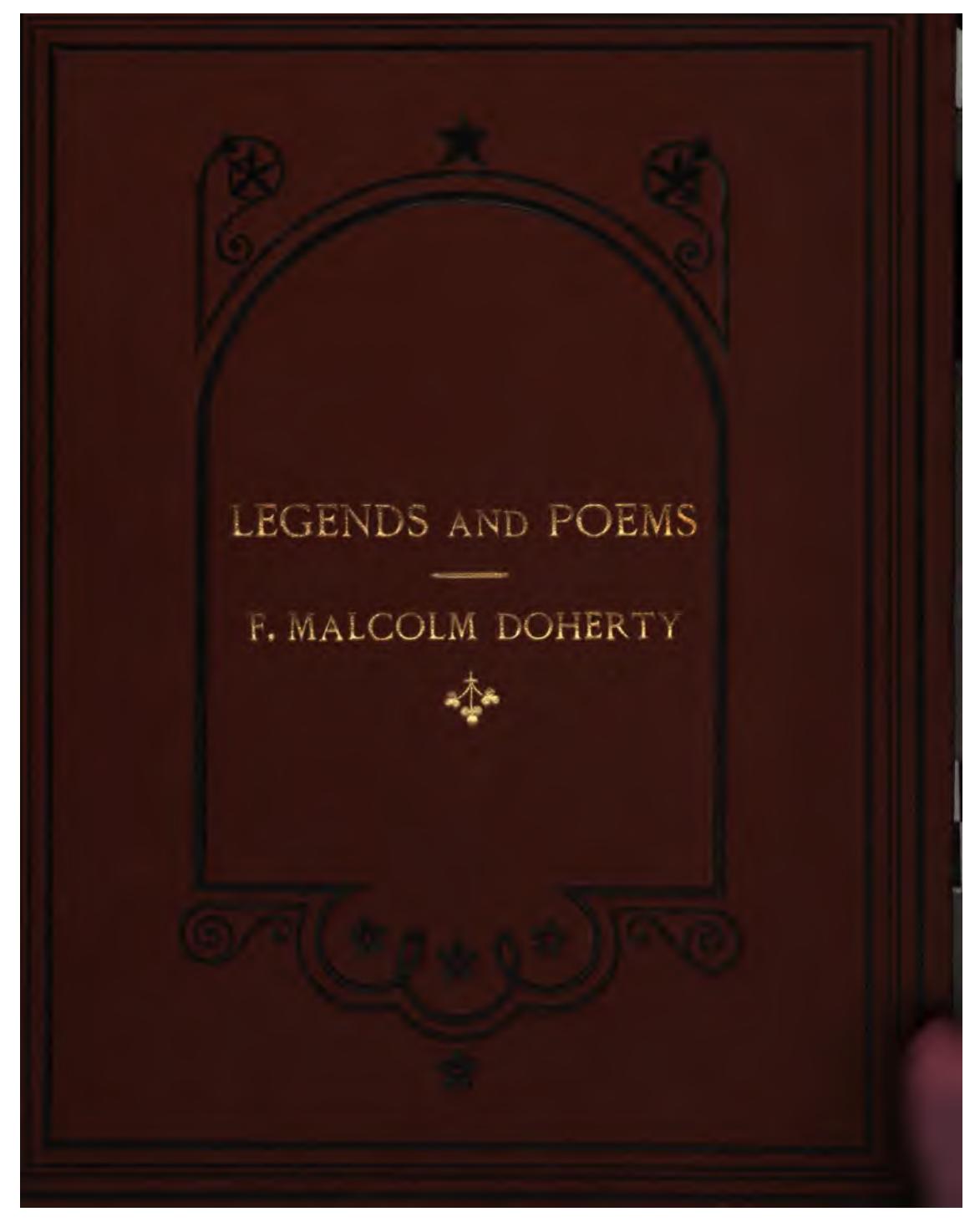
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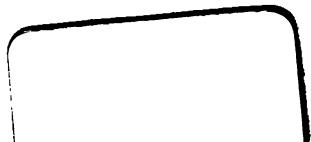
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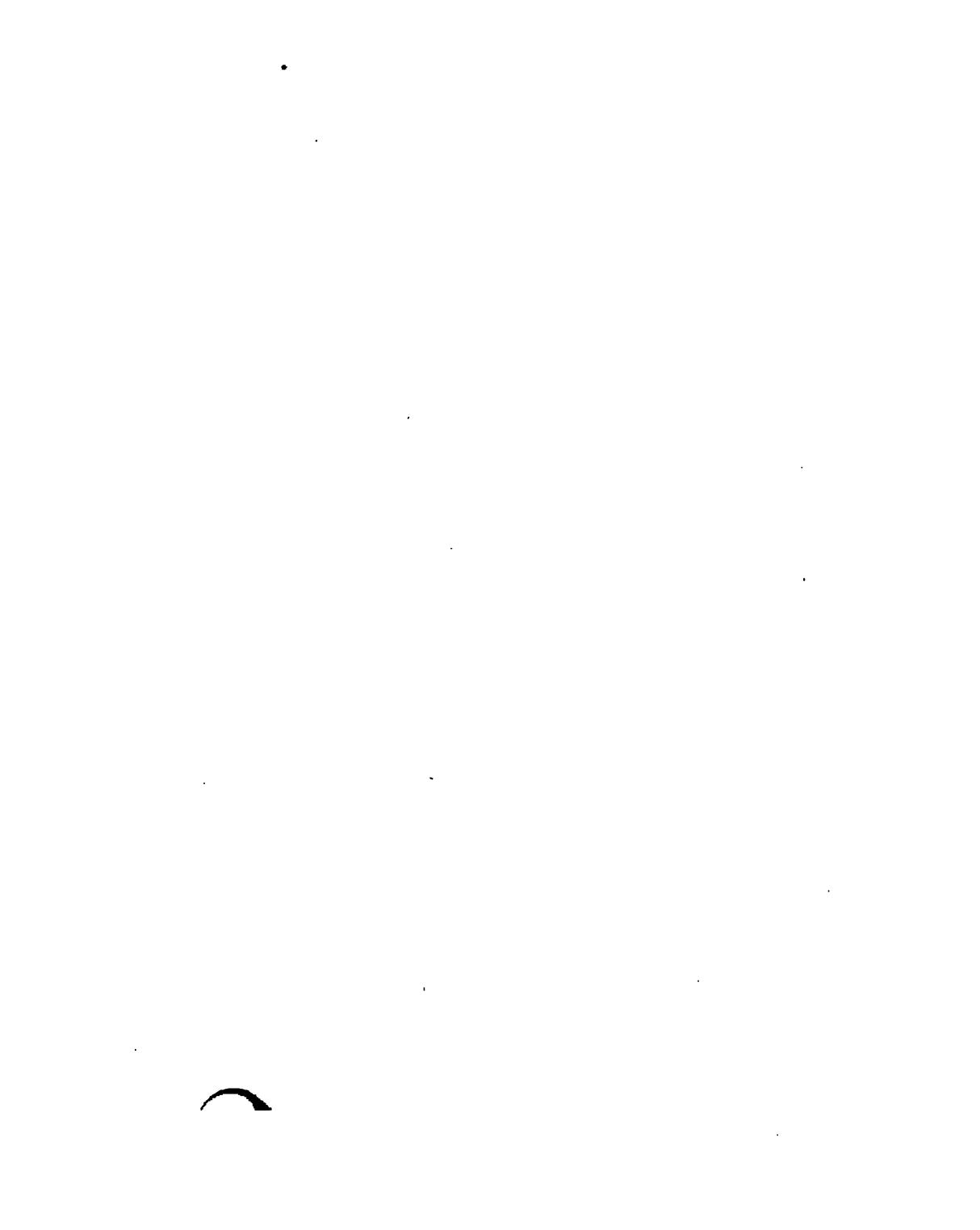
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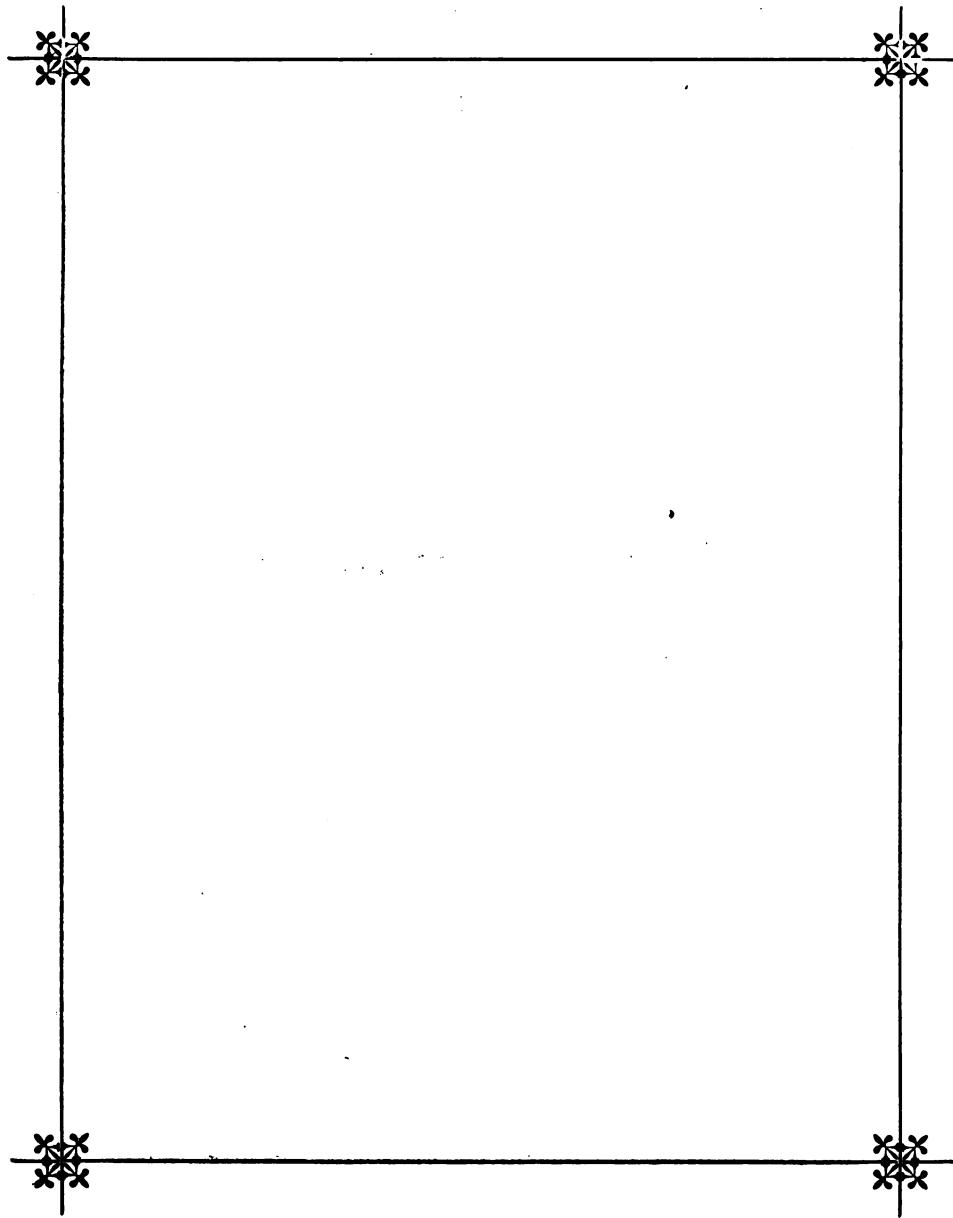
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LEGENDS AND POEMS.

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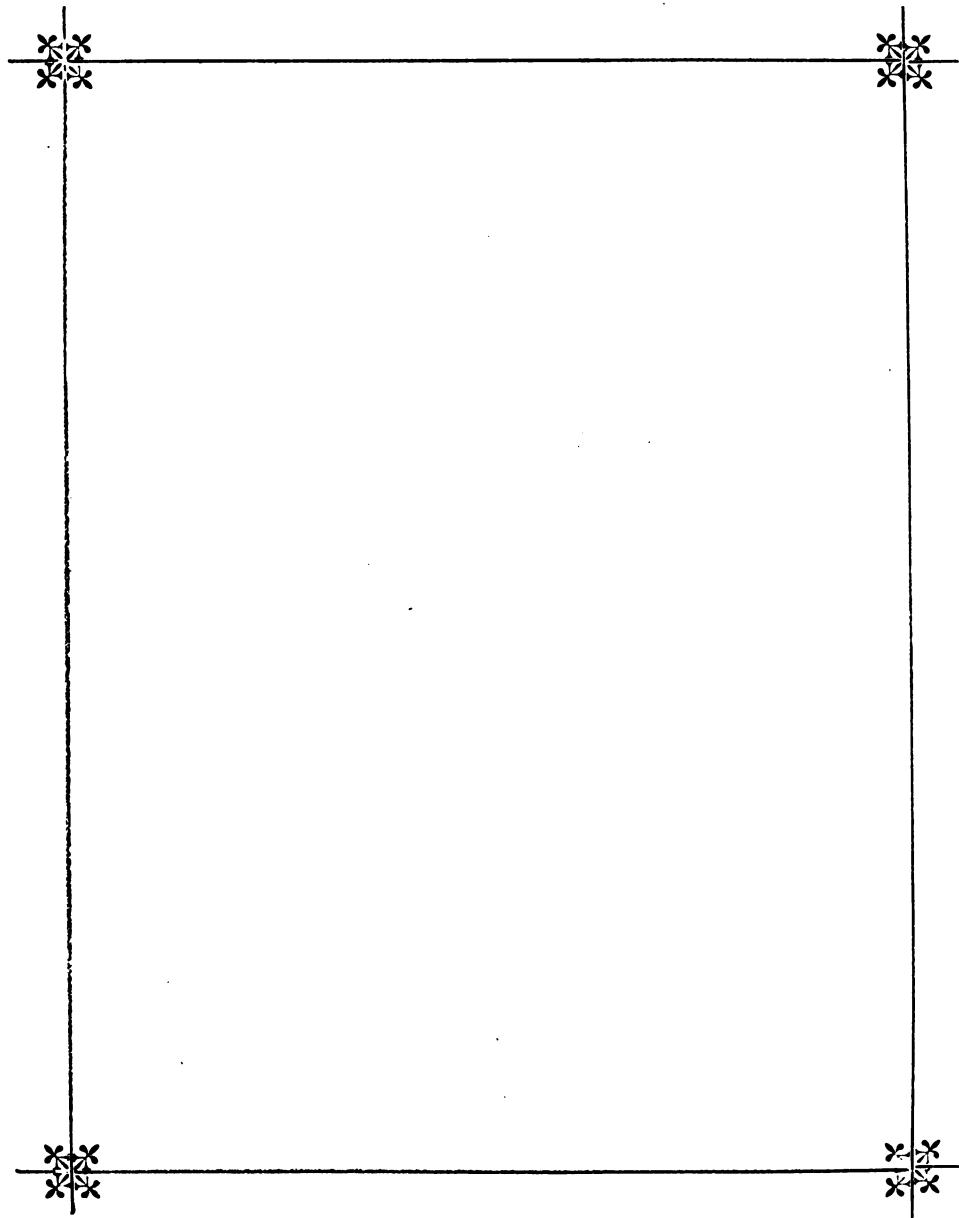
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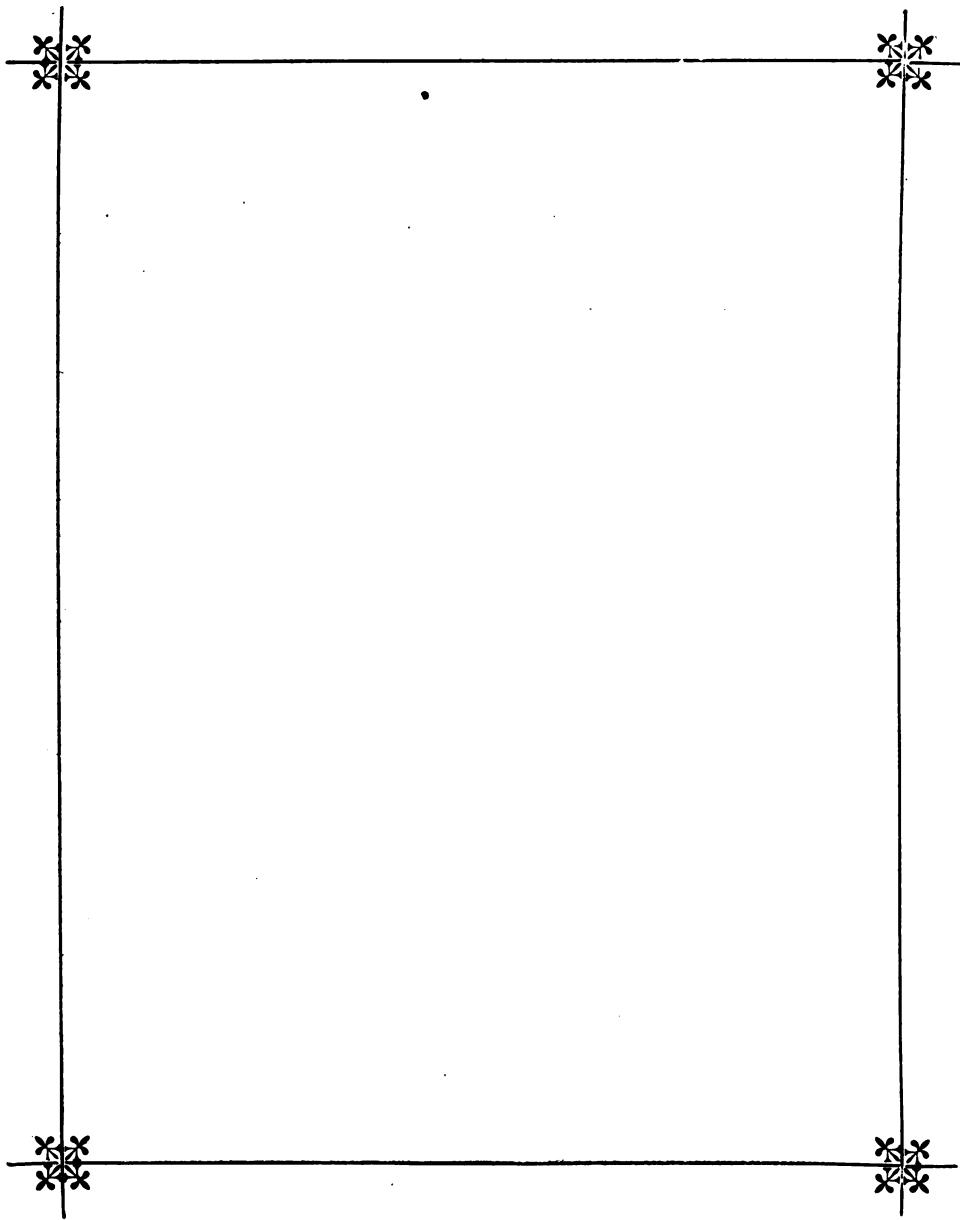
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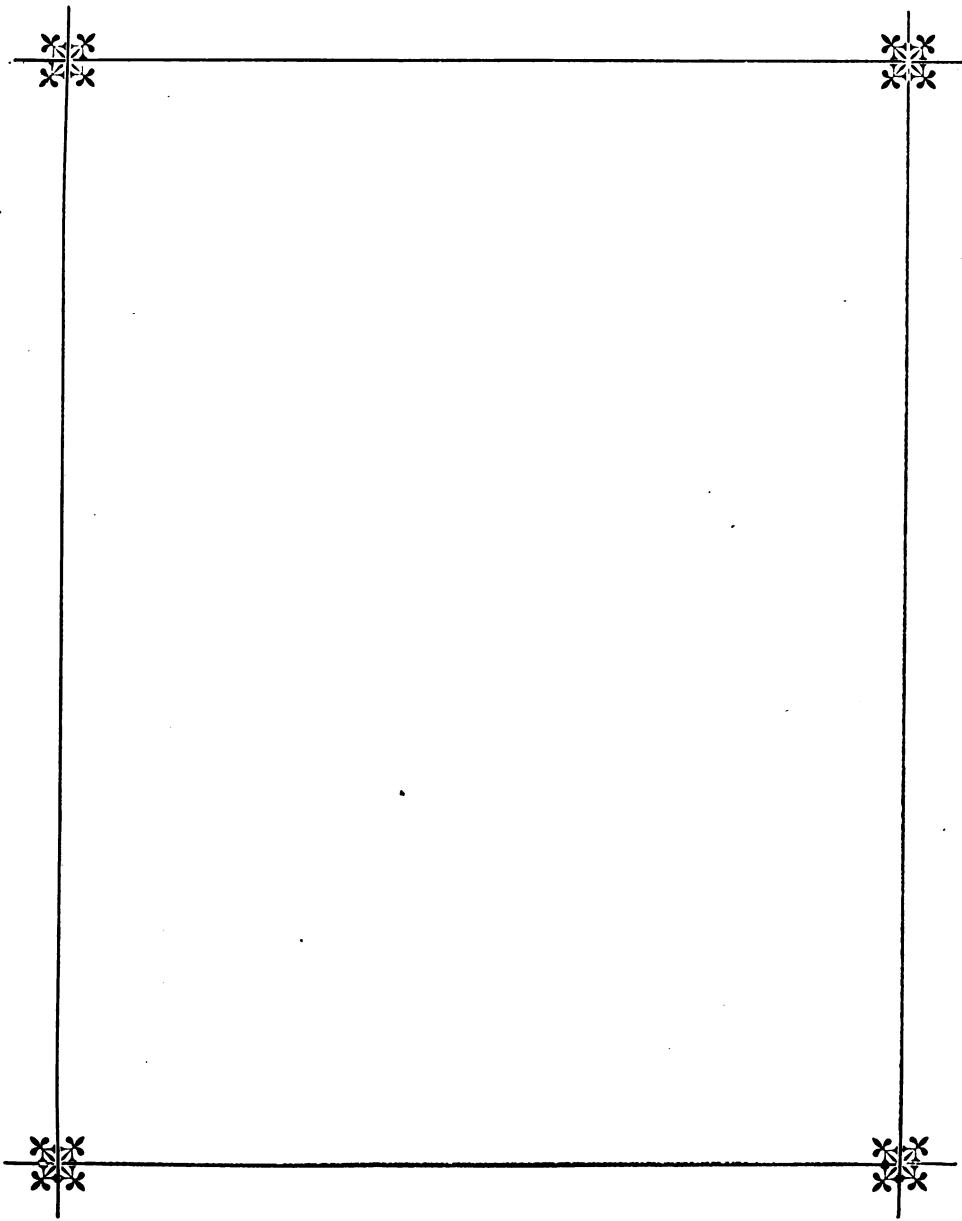
CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE LEGEND OF ST. CHRISTOPHER ...	9
THE HOLY THORN ...	18
PILATUS ...	30
ST. MARTIN'S SUMMER ...	36
AFTER THE BATTLE ...	41
TO MURIEL ...	47
THE FISHER'S WIFE ...	51
LOST ...	53
DISENCHANTMENT ...	55
THE ROBBER YEARS ...	59
NOTRE DAME DES VICTOIRES ...	62



*FORGIVE THESE WILD AND WANDERING CRIES,
CONFUSIONS OF A WASTED YOUTH ;
FORGIVE THEM WHERE THEY FAIL IN TRUTH,
AND IN THY WISDOM MAKE ME WISE.*

TENNYSON.





THE LEGEND OF ST. CHRISTOPHER.



GIANT man was old Christopher,
He was stout of limb and strong of nerve,
And he vowed that the mightiest king on earth
Was the only master whom he would serve.
Great deeds of prowess had Christopher done,
For many a chief he had bravely fought ;
But never his master yet had he found,
And still for the mightiest king he sought.

Till there came a day when he heard one say,
“ All earthly might is of little worth,
For the greatest of all the kings there be,
Is Christ, who is King both of heaven and earth.”
Up rises old Christopher then in haste,
To a holy hermit straight he hies.
“ Where can I find King Christ ? ” he asks ;
“ Tell me, thou hermit, holy and wise.

“ How can I serve Him ? for Him will I serve,
Since earthly might is of little worth,
If the greatest of all the kings there be
Is Christ, who is King both of heaven and earth.”
“ Son,” quoth the hermit, “ He whom thou seek’st
Is not to be served in a worldly way ;
For the kings of the earth thou may’st battle and fight,
To serve the Lord Christ thou must fast and pray.”

“Fast!” laughed old Christopher. “Holy man,
If I fasted, my strength would pass away;
Thou must find some other service for me;
I can fight, good father, I know not to pray.”
The hermit gazed on the mighty man,
On his sinewy limbs and massive frame,
And he thought, All gifts must be used for God,
But the service for all is not the same.

“Yea,” quoth he, “my son, the Lord of all
Can be served by all—there is yet one way
Thou canst serve Him well with thy giant strength,
Though thou wilt not fast, and thou know’st not to pray.
Who serves his fellows, he serves the Lord.
Go, dwell in the depths of yonder wood,
Where the mountain torrent comes fiercely down,
And rushes along in an angry flood.

“ When swollen high by the wintry rains,
Its waves by the stormy winds are tossed,
O'erwhelmed in its waters, with none to save,
Full oft is the lonely traveller lost.
There, Christopher, make thy dwelling-place,
Use thy great strength, not to fight, but to save ;
And so long as thou dwellest beside the flood,
Let never a soul be lost in its wave.

“ Bear rescue to all, but by never a one,
Be he rich or poor, let thine aid be bought ;
Take never a guerdon for that which thou dost,
For who serves the Lord Christ must serve Him for
So Christopher went from the holy man ; [nought.]”
Forth went the giant into the wood :
He tore him a palm-tree up by the roots,
To make him a staff, and he dwelt by the flood.

He dwelt by the flood, and for many a day
Was never a traveller lost in its wave ;
The young and the old, the rich and the poor,
He snatched alike from a watery grave :
The wayside beggar, the mitred priest,
The aged man, and the maiden fair ;
From many a warm and grateful heart
There rose for the giant a blessing and prayer.

But never a guerdon he took from one.
“ Mine aid,” said he, “ is not to be bought ;
’Tis the King of heaven and earth that I serve,
And who serves King Christ, he serves Him for nought.”
And the Lord looked forth from heaven and said,—
“ Behold this man who has found the way
To serve me well with his giant strength,
Though he will not fast and he knows not to pray.”

One dark and stormy winter's night,
When the wind was strong and the waves were high,
There was borne to old Christopher's listening ear
The gentle sound of a childlike cry.
Forth went he in haste. All sitting alone,
By the side of the flood was a beautiful child ;
His eyes shone bright through the murky night,
And he spoke in accents deep, yet mild :—

“ Oh, Christopher, carry me over the flood.”
“ That will I ! ” saith he, “ right willingly.
’Tis an easy task for old Christopher
To carry a burden light like thee.”
He lifted the child on his shoulders broad,
And waded out boldly into the stream ;
But scarce had he reached the middle deep,
When the child, who at first so light did seem,—

Grew heavy and heavier still to bear,
Till beneath the weight his shoulders bent ;
And the waves rose higher and higher around,
And the strength of the giant was well-nigh spent.
His monstrous limbs they quivered and shook,
And the palm-tree bent like a reed in his hand ;
But he struggled right bravely through the flood,
And carried his burden safe to land.

And then, as he laid him down on the bank,
He saw through the night that the childish head
Was crowned with a golden halo of light.
“ Who art thou, O child ? ” the giant said,
“ That hast pressed on me with a weight as though
I had borne the whole world on my back to-night ? ”
The child looked full in the giant’s face,
And his countenance shone divinely bright.

“Thou *hast* borne the world on thy shoulders,” he said,
“And, what than the world is of greater worth,
Thou hast borne its Maker; for I am He,
I am Christ, the King both of heaven and earth.
Thy work is accepted, thy labour done;
Oh, Christopher, thou hast found the way
To serve me well with thy giant strength,
Though thou would’st not fast and thou knew’st not to
pray.

“Thou hast long been my servant here on earth;
My saint henceforth, thou shalt follow me;
Plant here, for a token, thy staff by the flood;
It shall root and blossom for men to see.”
He vanished away: when morning broke,
Nor child nor giant was there to be seen;
The flood had gone down, and a crystal stream
Flowed gently along where the torrent had been.

And there rose by its side a stately tree ;
Its fruit was rich and its blossoms fair ;
And sweetly the birds on its branches sung—
'Twas the giant's staff that he planted there.
And men as they sat in its shade would tell
How the great St. Christopher found the way
To serve the Lord with his giant strength,
Though he would not fast and he knew not to pray.

And wherever in humble, childlike faith,
A simple deed is lovingly wrought,
Wherever a strong man uses his strength
To fight as the great St. Christopher fought,—
Not for self, but for others—for love, not gain,—
To serve the Lord he has found the way,
Though it may be, like holy St. Christopher,
He wills not to fast or he knows not to pray.



THE HOLY THORN.

A LEGEND OF GLASTONBURY ABBEY.

[AT Glastonbury Abbey, in Somersetshire, grew a miraculous thorn-tree, which was said to bear flowers every year on Christmas Day. The legend connected with it related that Joseph of Arimathea, having incurred the enmity of the Jews for his pious care of our Lord's body (as related by the Evangelists), was banished by them from Judæa. With twelve companions he was put into a boat, without oars or sails, and driven to sea. After long tossing about on the ocean, they were cast by God's providence on the coast of Britain. Thence they wandered on until they arrived at a hill, close to where the

Abbey of Glastonbury afterwards stood, which is called to this day "Weary-all-Hill." It was on Christmas morning that the strangers arrived here, and Joseph planted the pilgrim's staff, which he bore, in the ground, when forthwith it budded and burst into blossoms, filling the air with odours. This was the Holy Thorn, which, according to the tradition, never failed to bear flowers and leaves on Christmas Day.]



WAS the morn of the blessed Christmas Day,
When a stranger came to the Abbey gate ;
For the traveller who journeyed along that way,
There was ever a welcome—early or late.

Well known unto all who passed that way,
Where the Abbey of Glastonbury stood ;
Well known were its towers and portals grey,
And its gentle and holy Brotherhood.

There all were welcome—the board was spread
For prince and noble with costly fare ;
The poor and the hungry were clothed and fed,
And the sick were tended with gentle care.

But the traveller who came on that Christmas Day,
To the convent-gate in the morning light,
As he journeyed along on his weary way,
Had seen a strange and wonderful sight.

So passing strange to him did it seem
As he entered into the Abbey court,
That he almost thought of some empty dream
Of a fevered brain he had been the sport.

The Abbot came forth, his guest to meet—
No stranger had long for the Abbot to wait ;
He was ever the first his coming to greet,
And the last to speed him away from the gate.

“Thou art welcome, my son, to our convent cheer”
(And his speech betrayed him gently born);

“Thrice welcome is he, out of all the year,
Who comes to the Abbey on Christmas morn.”

“Thanks, Holy Father! I thank thee well
For thy courtesy,” the stranger replies;
“But what is the meaning, I pray thee tell,
Of the sight that this morn hath met mine eyes?

“If it be some vision, then tell me I pray,
If thou canst tell, what the vision may mean;
For hard by here I have seen this day
The strangest sight that ever was seen.

“The trees at this season are black and bare,
And yet, as I came along this morn,
In the chill of the cold mid-winter air,
I saw in blossom a beautiful thorn.

“ A thorn-tree covered with blossoms as fair
As ever were seen in the month of May ;
And its rich sweet perfume loaded the air,
And was borne to me as I went on my way.”

He paused, and the Abbot gently smiled—
But the smile was in courtesy, not in scorn.
“ My son, by no vision hast thou been beguiled,
Thou hast seen with thine eyes the Holy Thorn.”

“ My Father, I know not what this may mean,
I never heard tell of a Holy Thorn.”
“ Thou art strange, then, my son, in these parts, I ween,
To which thou hast come on this Christmas morn.

“ But blessed art thou, out of all the year,
To have come on the day when Christ was born ;
Now, listen to me—an’ it please thee to hear,
I will tell thee the tale of the Holy Thorn.”

A moment he paused—his head inclined—
To mutter a prayer, the holy man,
And then on his breast the cross he signed,
And thus the Abbot his tale began :—

“ Long ages ago, my son, thou must know,
The spot where this noble Abbey stands
Was marked by a building mean and low,
That was rudely raised by the loving hands

“ Of those who first to this island brought
The gospel message—a saintly band ;
Thou hast heard of St. Joseph, of him who wrought
That deed of love in the Holy Land.

“ By entombing the Master whom they had slain,
He earned for himself the hatred sore
Of wicked men—’twas a glorious gain,
To be driven away from that guilty shore.

“ They turned him adrift in an open boat,
Exposed to the fury of wind and wave,
Oarless and sailless on seas remote,
To find with his comrades a watery grave.

“ But a Pilot went with them over the sea,
The boat was steered by an unseen hand ;
For God was their Pilot, my son, 'twas He
Who brought them safe to this distant land.

“ They were tossed on the waves for many a day,
They were oft in peril and danger sore ;
Till at length—'twas His will, whom the winds obey—
They were cast by a storm on this island's shore.

“ Far off from hence, but they wandered on,
Not knowing whither their steps they bent,
And round about them a light there shone,
Which guided their feet on the way they went.

“ For long, long days they journeyed, until
They stood, at length, on yon hill-top there ;
’Tis called to this day by folk ‘ Weary-all-hill,’
For weary in sooth all those travellers were.

“ ’Twas on Christmas Day that the stranger band
A resting-place in this region found,
And the staff that Joseph bore in his hand,
He planted there in the frozen ground.

“ And then there was wrought a miracle there,
Such as never was seen since in early days
The rod of Aaron blossomed and bare
Before the Egyptian monarch’s gaze.

“ For lo ! on a sudden a beautiful tree
Grew up where the staff was placed in the ground ;
It was loaded with blossoms fair to see,
And sweetly it scented the air around.

“ Well might it, my son ; for he who had borne
That pilgrim’s staff in his pious hand,
And planted it there on that Christmas morn,
Had wrought a deed in the Holy Land—

“ A deed of love, of which men shall tell
Till human speech shall have ceased to be :
The hands that had handled the Life might well
Give life themselves to a senseless tree !

“ It burst into blossoms sweet and white—
White as the linen pure and fine ;
Sweet as the spices with which on that night
He had lovingly balmed the Form Divine.

“ ’Tis said that when Joseph his labour of love
Had ended that evening, heard of none
Save himself, there came a voice from above,
Which gently breathed in his ear, ‘ Well done ! ’

“ And ever they say, by night and day,
His drooping spirits to soothe and cheer,
As he journeyed along on his weary way,
‘ Well done ! ’ that voice would speak in his ear.

“ He heard it clear through the ocean’s roar,
As his bark was tossed on the stormy sea ;
’Twas the voice that had spoken once before
On the troubled waters of Galilee.

“ And perhaps in the spirit land, my son,
And in tones that are not for ears of clay,
That voice still says to him now, ‘ Well done ! ’
And will say it on till the judgment day.

“ However this be, on each Christmas morn
Since then has happened this wonderful thing,
In the midst of the wintry cold that thorn
Is clothed with the blossoms and scents of spring.

“ It dons a mantle of virgin white,
Each year on the day when Christ was born ;
And men, when they look on the wonderful sight,
Still say, to this day, ‘ ‘Tis the Holy Thorn.’

“ My tale is done, yet, O stranger, stay !
Thou hast come to the Abbey on Christmas morn—
Take hence this lesson with thee on thy way,
Of him who planted the Holy Thorn.

“ To thee, as to Joseph, it is not given
To handle the sacred body, indeed,
Of Him who lives for ever in heaven,
But yet of thy service, my son, He has need.

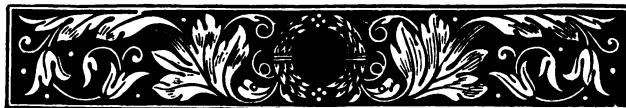
“ His body—the Church—is with us still ;
The poor—His brethren—are everywhere ;
He works most surely the Master’s will
Who learns for His members on earth to care.

“ Bear help to the helpless, the injured right,
And never thy hand from the poor withhold ;
Seek not in worldly pleasures delight,
Nor give thy soul to the lust of gold.

“ Pure as the blossom of yonder thorn,
Keep ever thy conscience pure within ;
And He who on this blest day was born
Shall wash thy soul from the stain of sin.

“ So perchance, at the last, thou too shalt hear,
Like Joseph of old, a voice, my son,
Which shall speak to thee in thy dying ear,
And whisper in gentle tones, ‘ Well done ! ’

“ And through all the years of eternity
Thou shalt learn to bless the Christmas morn,
When 'twas given to thee with thine eyes to see
The wonderful sight of the Holy Thorn.”



PILATUS.

[Every tourist to Switzerland knows Mount Pilatus, on the Lake of Lucerne. A tradition of great antiquity derives its name from Pontius Pilate, the wicked Governor of Judæa, who, after the Crucifixion, being banished to Gaul by Tiberius, wandered conscience-stricken among the mountains, till at length he ended his existence by throwing himself into a lake on the top of Mount Pilatus. The mountain in consequence labours under a very bad reputation, and the storms which gather on its summit and burst over the Lake of Lucerne are attributed to the unquiet spirit of Pilate hovering over the place where his body lies.]



T length I stand on this lone mountain peak,
But not e'en here the respite that I seek ;
I may find solitude, but never peace,
Till from my hated self I get release.

Am I then doomed to seek in vain for death,
And draw for ever this polluted breath,
Maddened by memory ? In vain I've tried,
By flying from mankind, myself to hide.
My awful crime all nature seems to know ;
I hear it blazoned wheresoe'er I go ;
The storm-wind blusters it—the summer breeze
Whispers it, shuddering, amongst the trees ;
For ever in mine ear there rings that cry
Of horror—“ Crucify Him ! crucify !”
The torrent falling from the mountain's crown
Tells my dread secret as it rushes down ;
It babbles to the river of my shame ;
The river hastens onward to proclaim
The tidings to the ocean—as they roll,
Its waters thunder forth from pole to pole
My infamy, until one hideous curse
Rises for me throughout the universe.

Beneath the waters of yon mountain lake
Fain would I sleep, and never more awake.
But would they hold me? would the lowest deep
Of ocean suffer me in peace to sleep?
No! for the sea is His!—but yonder lake
Which tempts me in its bosom dark to make
A plunge for nothingness, on this far height
Is hidden so remote from human sight,
So desolate and lonely, that it well
Might be the passage leading unto hell.
Then will I plunge—hell's nethermost abyss
Can bring no agony to equal this;
Demons can not devise a torment worse
Than this undying torture of remorse,
Which gnaws upon my heart, and in mine ear
These never silent voices that I hear—
That crowd of babblers with their impious cry
Still shrieking—“Crucify Him! crucify!”

But will those waters bring to me release ?
Within their bosom shall I be at peace
From these unearthly torments that I bear ?
No ; something seems to tell me that e'en there
I shall not rest me, but with gibe and jeer
Ten thousand demon voices in mine ear
Will madden me with that blaspheming cry,
And hiss out—"Crucify Him ! crucify!"
And I shall hear it, and those words of dread
Will haunt me ever, and among the dead
I shall be loathèd, for some unseen hand
Will mark my guilty forehead with a brand
Deeper than his who in the early time
First slew his brother—ah, how light his crime
When matched with mine ! He, in his jealous strife,
Took but his brother's—I, my Maker's life !

Oh, awful thought, that on the very brink
Of this dark water makes me almost shrink

From longed-for death !—shall I behold Him there ?
That thought adds horror even to despair—
To see Him—to behold that face again
From whose deep speechless grief I turned me then,
Then when I might have saved Him—I alone
Condemned Him—now upon His judgment throne
To see Him sitting, who before mine own
Once stood a prisoner. But this cannot be :
He is in heaven ; in hell I shall not see
The awful vision of His face ; 'tis well,
Welcome for me the lowest depths of hell ;
Let soul and body be for ever cursed,
Wreak on me, demons, wreak your very worst—
But if the damned can ever sue for grace,
Spare me the awful vision of His face !

Yes, I will seek the rest for which I crave
Beneath these waters ; there shall be my grave,
My monument this mountain—it shall throw

A dark weird shadow on the lake below.
The thunder-clouds around its crest shall form,
And at its foot the sudden-rising storm
Shall burst in fury; there the treach'rous wave
Shall lure the stranger to a watery grave.
Woe to the sailor whom the winds shall urge,
Tossed in his craft upon that fatal surge!
Woe to the maid whose lover's little bark
Shall cross the shadow of this mountain dark!
This mountain! men shall call it by my name,
An everlasting witness to my shame!
Far in the future, children yet unborn
Shall learn the meaning of that name of scorn,
And learn to curse it. Men shall come and go,
And each in turn my infamy will know.
Fresh generations, as the ages roll,
Shall heap fresh imprecations on my soul
For ever, till throughout the universe
There rise for Pilate one gigantic curse!



ST. MARTIN'S SUMMER.

“Es el sol la capa de los povres.”

(The sun is the poor man's cloak.)

Spanish Proverb.


N the chill of the cold November,
At the close of the waning year,
When the autumn leaves are falling,
And the days are dark and drear,
There sat by the gate of the city,
All numbed by the wintry blast,
An aged man in beggarly rags,
A desolate outcast.

It chanced that one day as the soldiers
Came marching out of the city,
They passed through the gate where the beggar sate
With never a word of pity ;
Till one from his comrades turned aside,
For it pitied the soldier bold
To see the beggar, whose aged limbs
Were shivering in the cold.

“ Silver and gold, my friend, I have none,
But all that I have,” quoth he,
“ I will share with thee for the love of Christ,
And I share it willingly.”
He took from his shoulders the cloak he wore,
His sword from its sheath he drew,
And then with the edge of his trusty blade
He sundered the cloak in two.

One half he stooped and with tender hand
On the old man's shoulders hung,
And carelessly then the other half
On his own broad back he flung.
He marched away, and the soldiers jeered
And jested with noisy glee,
Stout Martin marching along by their side,
With half of a cloak to see !

But that night, when Martin was laid at rest
On his pallet coarse and mean,
One stood by his side in the barrack-room,
Who had entered all unseen.
A crown of thorns on His head He wore,
And His beautiful face was marred
By sorrow and pain ; His hands and His feet
With the print of a nail were scarred.

And lo ! from His sacred shoulders hung
The half of a soldier's cloak ;
And thus, through the stillness of the night,
In Martin's ear He spoke :
“ O Martin, it was with me, thy Lord,
That thy soldier's cloak thou didst share ;
The deed of love thou hast wrought this day
Undying fruit shall bear.”

And ever since then, in the autumn tide
Does the heaven a cloak bestow,
In mem'ry of good St. Martin's deed,
On every beggar below.
For the sun is the poor man's cloak—it warms
His limbs with its cheering rays,
And gladdens his heart for a little span,
In the chill November days.

" St. Martin's summer " they call it still ;
For the sun shines clear and bright,
And covers the wintry earth for a while
With a mantle of warmth and light.
'Tis the half of St. Martin's cloak which he gave
To the beggar that day—since then
It has covered the limbs and cheered the hearts
(Of countless millions of men.





AFTER THE BATTLE.

[The following lines refer to an incident which occurred after one of the battles during the Franco-German war, in January, 1871.]



N the field where battle has late been won,
On the teeming field of death,
Where friend and foe lie side by side,
One is parting hard with breath :
But the life blood ebbing away
From his breast he does not feel,
For his heart is wrung by a fiercer pang
Than is born of bullet or steel.

He has wandered in fancy far away
From the stranger soil where he lies,—
To his far-off home in the fatherland,
And he sees, with Fancy's eyes,
His fair young wife, with her baby boy
Upon her knees—and there,
In the well-known corner by the hearth
He sees—his empty chair.

He remembers well on that summer morn,
When they tore him away to fight,
How bravely she strove, that tender wife,
To hide her tears from his sight;
And how when he turned to kiss his boy,
The sturdy infant cried,
To follow his father off to the war,
And march with a sword by his side.

He thinks how for long and dreary days
They will watch, and watch in vain,
For the soldier who marched away that morn,
Who never will come again.
How by doubt, more cruel than death itself,
Her heart will be oppressed,
While he, far away in a nameless grave,
In the stranger's land is at rest.

Oh, for one human ear in which
His brief sad tale to tell !
To charge it with one dying word
For those he loves so well—
One word of blessing for his boy—
Is there none, O God, not one,
To carry a father's dying word
Of blessing to his son ?

Ha ! has heaven then heard that frantic prayer,
Or is it a fevered brain
That has conjured up this lovely dream ?
No ; he has not cried in vain.
A woman's form is by his side,
And bathes his burning brow :
She bears on her arm a blood-red cross ;
Ah ! he knows its meaning now.

One dying effort to loose his tongue,
He mutters a name—an address.
Her ear is bent to the closing lips,
And she catches a faint "God bless."
'Tis enough—a world of unuttered thanks
In a single glance exprest—
A sigh of relief: one short sharp pang,
And the soldier is gone to his rest.

Kind Nature covered his body that night
With a snow-white funeral pall,
From the darkened heavens overhead
Did the big flakes gently fall.
They silently covered that bloody field
With a mantle of virgin white ;—
'Twas well that the havoc man had wrought
Kind Nature hid that night.

'Twere shame that the piercing eye of day
Should look on that hideous sight ;
And the devilish work of man be seen
In the pure fresh morning light.
So with tender pity she hides it all,
She buries friend and foe,
She wraps them all in one broad white shroud,
In a winding-sheet of snow !

But the Saxon soldier's dying word
Will be wasted far from here,
Will be borne away to his distant home,
And breathed in a widowed ear.
'Twill soothe her bitter grief to hear
A kind voice gently tell,
How he died with blessings on his lips
For those he loved so well.

She'll treasure for her baby boy
That message from the dead;
Perhaps in after years 'twill bring
A blessing on his head.
And mother and son alike will pray—
As they pray who know such loss—
For her who bore on her arm that day
The sign of the blood-red cross!



To MURIEL.

[Whose young mother died after giving birth to her, January the 7th, 1872.]



LEEP, Baby, sleep; ah! little you dream,
As you lie on a stranger-breast,
Of her on whose clay-cold bosom your head
Will never be laid to rest.

You blissfully slumber, unmindful of her
Whom others so sadly weep ;
You slumber to wake, but *she* sleeps on,
In her long, deep, dreamless sleep.

You brightly smile, but that rich bequest
Of smiles is a dear-bought gain—
You have robbed them all from the icy lips
Which never will smile again.

Yet keep those smiles while you may, Baby ;
Ah, me ! in the future years,
Mayhap you will all too soon succeed
To a legacy of tears.

For the tears that never wet *her* cheeks
May be kept for *you* to shed—
'Tis for those who live to suffer :
Peace, peace, is for the dead.

And if age shall come to you, Baby,
When time shall trace on *your* brow
The wrinkles he never wrote upon *hers*,
She will then be youthful as now.

Ageless to *her*, the years as they pass,
That will turn *your* locks to grey,—
The child will grow old with the weight of days,
The mother is young for aye.

You will learn to breathe a prayer, Baby,
For the mother you never knew :
In the silent land, be you well assured,
She has not forgotten you.

And if ever a spirit may be blessed
Through the clay-clogged prayers of earth,
Your prayer should bring blessing to her
Who died to give you birth.

And perhaps in that far-off land, Baby,
After many a weary year,
Your head may find rest on the gentle breast
Where it never was pillow'd here.





THE FISHER'S WIFE.

HE fisherman's wife she stood on the strand,
And watched him sail away;
As she waved a last adieu with her hand
He could hear her gently pray.
He heard her pray—for she would not weep
Till she saw his bark no more—
“God keep my fisher from harm on the deep,
And send him safe to shore.”

She prayed and wept, and the fisher was kept
Secure on the storm-tossed wave ;
But she—ere he came back again, she slept
In a green and new-made grave !
None weeps for him now, but at times he seems,
When rocked in his bark by the storm,
To catch in his dreams faint shadowy gleams
Of a dear familiar form.

He sees her stand on the golden sand
That is washed by a crystal sea ;
And she beckons to him with a shining hand !
Ah, yes, it is surely she !
She watches for him, but she does not weep,
And he hears her pray once more—
“ God keep my fisher from harm on the deep,
And bring him to this fair shore.”



LOST.



We shall meet no more as we used to meet,
And wander side by side,
Or rest in the old familiar seat,
In the golden eventide.

We shall sit no more as we used to sit,
And gaze at the starlit sky,
When you playfully said that the lamps were lit
For angel trav'lers on high.

The moon still reigns on her throne above,
The stars are as bright as then ;
But the sweet, sweet song that I used to love
Will never be heard again.

You have gone with your song to the spirit-land,
The lamps have lighted you home :
That strain was heard by the angel band,
And they beckon'd to you to come.

Oh ! why did they take you, those angels above ?
For if heaven so happy be,
What need to covet the one whose love
Made heaven on earth for me ?





DISENCHANTMENT.

THE morning was joyous and bright,
A morning of balmy spring,
When I rose with the early light,
As the birds began to sing.
The lark above me was cleaving
The air as he rose on high;
But the earth that he was leaving
Seemed fairer to me than the sky.

For light and free was my heart,
In the joyous morning of life ;
I had yet to bear my part
In its turmoil and its strife.
There had come no sombre warning
To sadden my soul as yet ;
I only wished, on that morning,
That the sun would never set.

But ere half of that day had sped,
The dark clouds hid the sky ;
The thunder crashed o'erhead,
And the storm swept fiercely by.
I bowed my head to the blast,
But I knew on its icy wing
It had borne a blight, as it passed,
To the hopes and the promise of spring.

And I thought of the lark I had seen
Rising up in the morning light,
And I saw how wise he had been
To take so early his flight.
I wished! oh, I wished, in my heart,
That, like him, I could heavenwards soar ;
From this earth I would soon depart,
And never return to it more.

And the evening came at last,
But it brought no soothing rest ;
For the sky was overcast,
And lowering clouds in the west,
Which seemed to promise a morrow
No fairer than to-day—
No hope that my load of sorrow
Would pass with the night away.

As I laid my throbbing head
So wearily down at night,
And counted the hours that had sped
Since I rose with the morning light;
I had bitterly learnt to pray—
As I never had prayed before—
“ If to-morrow be like to-day,
God grant that I wake no more.”





THE ROBBER YEARS.



YEARS, ye robber years,
Ye have stripped me of all my wealth,
The things which I hoarded and prized
Ye have taken away by stealth.
Noiselessly, quietly coming,
Noiselessly gliding away,
Ye have taken your flight unseen,
O robber years, with your prey.

Ye have left your footprints behind,
O years, as ye fled away ;
On the brow you have seared and furrowed,
On the head ye have turned to grey.
But deeper than these are the traces,
Far deeper the sorrow and smart,
Ye have left with your pitiless thefts,
On a void and aching heart.

For ye have an accomplice, O years ;
I know your accomplice—Death.
He has passed so close to me,
That I felt his icy breath ;
He came to my very side,
With his quiet, stealthy tread,
And took my treasures up
In his bony arms—and fled.

THE ROBBER YEARS.

61

Where do ye hide them, O years ?
Where do ye the spoil conceal ?
Some place should be rich indeed
With the costly treasures ye steal,
With the countless millions of charms,
With the youth and beauty and mirth,
With the loved and loving hearts
Ye have robbed from the sons of earth.

O years, ye robber years,
There surely will come a day
When ye shall be made to restore
The spoils ye have carried away ;
A day when at length the reign
Of the tyrant, Time, shall be o'er ;
Then we shall recover our treasures,
And years, ye shall rob us no more.



NOTRE DAME DES VICTOIRES.

[During the war between France and Germany, the church of Notre Dame des Victoires in Paris was continually filled with worshippers. It was curious to observe the gradual alteration in the tone of the supplications addressed to "Our Lady," according as events proceeded, from the first confident vows when the army of France went forth, to the cry of despair when Paris was besieged.]

AT THE OUTSET.



VE MARIA, hear our vow,
Lady of Victory, do thou
Forth with our hosts to battle go,
And grant us victory o'er the foe.

Triumphant them to thee we'll raise
The song of thankfulness and praise ;
Thy help and succour we'll confess,
Ave Maria, hear, and bless.

IN THE MIDDLE.

Ave Maria, hear our prayer,
Mother of Mercy, hear, and spare ;
Thou who hast shed a woman's tear,
Thou who hast known a mother's fear ;
Our sons, our husbands, keep from harm,
Shield them in battle with thine arm ;
Thy powerful aid can reach e'en there,
Mother of Mercy, hear, and spare.

AT THE END.

Ave Maria, hear our cry,
Lady of Succour, be thou nigh

To shield us in our trial hour,
And curb the fell invader's power.
Our hearths, our altars claim thy care,
Forsake us not in our despair.
Help of the lost, thy help we crave,
Ave Maria, hear, and save.



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